

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is designed to be a handy guide to making your family camping experience extra fun. Read this at home before you leave, and bring it with you to use during your trip. Choose activities that appeal to you. Have family members choose something that appeals to them. You might ask older kids to take charge of certain activities (for example, leading a game to keep everyone occupied while you're making lunch, or even helping to make lunch for everyone). Put younger children in charge of picking one family activity for each day or collecting the rocks and sticks needed for an activity. Follow the easy-to-read instructions, or let the games and crafts spark your own creativity.

The first couple of chapters provide advice on planning your trip—preparing, packing, getting the kids excited, and setting everything up for a successful outing with the family. Chapter three focuses on the most popular family outdoor pastime that will likely be your main activity each day, from hiking to birding to fishing. This isn't a how-to guide for each activity, but you'll find ideas for making sure each planned activity is as successful and family friendly as it can be. After that you'll find tons of ideas on how to keep everyone engaged during the natural ups and downs of the day, with chapters on ways to explore and be active in nature, games you can play outdoors, outdoor arts and crafts projects, and favorite camp songs to sing. You can find quiet time activities, energy busters, solo activities, and recommended ages for fun and games of all kinds in the Activity Finder at the end of the book. Of course, each child and family is unique, so use this as a general guide. You know your kids best.

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Photo by Kevin Meynell

Enhancing each chapter are sidebars with fascinating facts that will bring you even closer to nature (“Did You Know?”), special tips for kids (“Psst .

. . Kids!”), topics for conversation (“Family Conversation Starters”), and jokes to share (“Laugh Time!”).

Many activities include suggestions for recording the experience in a NATURE JOURNAL.

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This is highly recommended but really depends on whether individual campers are into it or not. There are also options for being a PHOTOJOURNALIST. A camera is one of the few pieces of technology we recommend you bring along. (See chapter 1 for more information on Nature Journals and being a Photojournalist.)

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A big thank you to all the families that helped beta test activities in the book on camping trips and in parks and those who served as models for photographs. My appreciation goes out to all the photographers who contributed images to this book, and a loud shout out to the talented David Rolf and photographer extraordinaire Kevin Meynell (kevinmeynell.com).

Thanks to Katie Benoit Cardoso at Globe Pequot for giving me the chance to write this book and to Imee Curiel for all her wonderful editing advice that helped to shape the final book.

I want to recognize Traver Huggins, Alex Krichevsky, and other family members and friends for their contributions of favorite outdoor activities and games. Thanks to Nelly's Java for a table to work on and great coffee, as well as OakStop. Thanks to Mom and Dad for taking us to Silver Lake every summer. A special thank you to my sons, Ben and Max, who gave me feedback on games and ideas for activities and did just about all the fun stuff in this book. Major gratitude goes to my husband, Doug, for his support, belief, and love.